K. Philanthropos. 18

A LETTER TO Mr. *LAW*;

Occaſion'd by reading his

Treatiſe on Chriſtian Perfection:

WITH A

COPY of VERSES,

Addreſs'd to the ſame AUTHOR.

By a LOVER *of* MANKIND.

LONDON:

Printed for W. HINCHLIFFE, at *Dryden's* Head under the *Royal-Exchange.* 1728. [Price 6*d.*]

A

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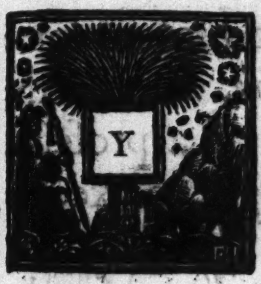
Printed for W. Henderson, at Dryden's Head, over the Rev. Dr. Chandler's Meeting, in Princes-Street, Leicester-Fields.

A LETTER TO Mr. *LAW*, &c.

SIR,



OUR *Treatise* on *Christian Perfection*, fell but very lately into my Hands; else, it's possible I shou'd have troubled both *you*, and the *World*, with these few *Remarks* sooner. But whatever *Crisis* may be requisite to serve *popular Designs*, it can *never* be unseasonable to espouse the Cause of *Truth*.

I WROTE *the Copy of Verſes* ſub-join'd to this Letter, meerly for my own Amuſement, and the Entertainment of ſome Friends, who were offended with your *Notions*, without any Intention of ſending it to the Preſs: But when I had form'd a Reſolution of ſhewing it to the *Publick*, I thought it neceſſary to ſay ſomething *more* on the Subject, that would not ſo well bear a *poetical Dreſs*; and this with a View, partly in my own Favour, as well as to defend the Rights of Human Nature, which you have unworthily invaded. I heartily wiſh I was better qualified for an Advocate in ſo good a Cauſe.

MY chief Aim was to hint at ſome Imperfections in your *Book*, without the Trouble and Formality of a profeſs'd *Anſwer*. At firſt I thought to execute this Deſign in the Way of *Preface*; but that preſently ſwell'd too large for the *Poem*; and immediately determin'd me in Favour of the Method I have choſen, of writing directly to your ſelf.

THE

THE Honour I pay to your Character, and the good Opinion I entertain of your pious Designs, have, I hope, restrain'd me from any Indecencies of Expression, or unmannerly Insinuation: And I do with a great deal of Pleasure, subscribe to your Praise, where my own Sense and Reason, as well as the common Cause of Mankind, do not interfere.

PARTICULARLY, in your just and reasonable Accusation of the *Stage*, which I can't but think (at least as it is now manag'd) an Entertainment altogether unbecoming a *Religious*, much more a *Christian* Society. Nor dare I be so unjust as not to own, that you have in many other Respects, advanced the Ends of true Piety, by reproving in the handsomest Manner, those flagrant and fashionable Vices, which are wholly inconsistent with the *Profession* we make.

BUT when I have allow'd this, you must be so good as to pardon me, in dissenting from a great deal more, that

that you are pleaſed to ſay; eſpecially on the Subject of *Self-denial*; where I can't but apprehend, you miſlead others, as well as deceive your ſelf.

I HAVE neither Time, nor Ability, to implead your ſeveral *Particulars*; and leſs Inclination, to encounter your *Comments*, on that formidable Body of *Texts*, which you have ranged in Battle-array againſt the innocent Pleaſures of Life: But I am ſure, I can point out ſome plain *Fallacies*.

ONE, is under the Head of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, where you ſtrangely miſtake the obvious Senſe of the *Parable*; and meanly defend your ſelf, by a trifling and ſervile Appeal to the meer *Letter* of the *Text*. Forgetting to charge *Dives* with his greateſt *Crime*, the Want of Charity to *Lazarus*, you have conſign'd him to *Hell*, only for being *cloath'd in Purple and fine Linnen, and faring ſumptuouſly every Day*. (Pag. 101.)

AND yet, as tenacious as you are of the *Letter*, in this *Inſtance*, (even to the ſacrificing

ſacrificing of common Senſe and Reaſon,) how notorious is your Self-inconſiſtency elſewhere! In explaining what our Saviour intended by the Terms *ſell all*, you freely give up that *Expreſſion*, as too wild and abſurd, for any ſober Underſtanding to interpret *literally*. (Page 112.) Tho' the Mitigation of it, upon your *Suppoſition*, ſeems very needleſs; for when you had gone ſo far, you might as well have proceeded, and required us immediately to ſign and ſeal to the Conveyance of our *Eſtates*: For we are like to ſave but very little, by the *Compoſition* you make for us. Surely this *Evaſion* would have come with a much better Grace from any Body than you; who are every where ſo fond of the *literal* Senſe, where it ſerves your Purpoſe.

WHAT ſtill aggravates your Partiality is, that you have been but juſt before expoſtulating very warmly with thoſe Perſons, who have tried to render this *Text* more favourable than you like.

You

You mention their Sense (Page 103.) *viz.* " That whenever we cannot keep " our Possessions without violating " some essential Duty of a Christian, " that then, and not 'till then, need we " think that we are call'd upon by " Christ to quit all and follow him". And then you tell us, (Page 105.) " that " this is not the *open express'd* Sense of " the Words"; -- and ask the Christian, " How he shall be satisfied that " there is no Danger in following it"? Why truly, Sir, full as well as you can be satisfied in yours: Especially if he calls in that Text to his Aid, *If any Man come to me, and hate not his Father, and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple*, Luke xiv. 26. You will not, I presume, say that this Declaration of our *Saviour* requires us to reject and abandon our natural *Relations or Lives*; only so far, as they may happen to interfere, with the greater Regard we owe to his

Honour

Honour and *Interest*, as well as our own inviolable *Duty*. And the Cases being so much the same, if this be the obvious Sense of *one* Passage, I don't see why it may not as fairly become the *other*, without involving us in all that Danger, with which you seem to threaten us. The Argument from comparing these two Places together, concludes so strong against you, that I think it is not in the Power of all your *Skill* and *Rhetorick* to evade its Force.

But after all, taking the *Text* in what *Light* you please, I can't but think, that you have entirely mistaken the true Sense of our *Saviour*'s *Command* to the young Man; which I believe was never intended for a *Rule* to after Ages: And I am not a little sure, that there is a great deal, both from the *Text* itself, as well as the Nature of the Thing, to support my Conjecture.

There seem to be two Reasons why *Christ* might propose this Condition to the Youth; the one to prove him, and

the other with a View of enlisting him amongst his then *Disciples* and *Followers*; who had all of them done the same that he required of him, by forsaking their temporal Interests to attend upon his *Person*, and receive his immediate *Instructions*: And tho' these were not *great Possessions*, yet being their *all*, it was in that Sense as much as what he seem'd to exact from this Man of Wealth.

For the First, as our *Saviour* knew his Thoughts, so he discover'd the worldly Spirit that rul'd his Heart. He was in other Respects strictly Religious, and, as he tells our *Lord*, had kept the Commandments from his Youth; this no doubt made him think tolerably well of himself: The *Son of God* therefore to show him to himself, and expose his Weakness to publick Advantage, proves him by a *Test* which he could not stand; and therefore evinced him not to be the *Man* he took himself for. But this by no Means

proves,

proves, that our *Saviour* did really intend to impose the severe Condition upon him: And, I hope, it will not be thought trifling or ridiculous, if to illustrate this Matter the better, I venture to ask, Whether we don't often think fit to use Children in the same Manner? When we wou'd try their Temper and Disposition, we ask 'em to give us some Bauble they possess, and promise them finer Things in Return; if they refuse, we reproach and upbraid their little Selfishness; if they consent, we disclaim the Gift, and return it to 'em with Assurances, that we meant not to rob them, but prove their Love and Esteem. And in this Case, how justly may I apply those Words of our *Saviour*, with a little Variation as to the Circumstance? *If earthly Parents that are evil, &c.* Matt. vii. Vers. 11.

I WILL not presume to say, that *Jesus Christ* did really *mean* no more than this in the Case before us, nor

need I; for if it muſt be inſiſted on, that he did indeed expect him to part with all his *Poſſeſſion*, the other Part of the *Text*, as well as the ſecond Reaſon I mention'd, do moſt plainly ſhew with what View he did it. Not as he was to continue amongſt the World, but as he was called out of it, to aſſociate with our *Lord* and his profeſs'd Followers; and perhaps to execute Part of that important Commiſſion, with which he afterwards inveſted them: And this is a Caſe too *peculiar* and *extraordinary*, to be drawn into a *Precedent* for *univerſal Imitation*. As well might you inſiſt, that Chriſtians ſhould have all Things in common *now* as they had *then*; which would make but *wild Work*, at a Time, when the Circumſtances of Chriſtianity are ſo widely different.

You perſevere in the ſame Miſtake, by telling us (Page 107.) that "the "Apoſtles took that Command of their "Maſter's to the young Man, to ſig-

"nify

" nify the common Conditions of en-
" tering into Chriſtianity, and imme-
" diately declared, that they had *left*
" *all and followed him* ".

THERE may poſſibly be a Difference between the common Conditions of entering into Chriſtianity, and the more peculiar and relative Requirements of the firſt Diſcipleſhip. But however that be, it is notorious, there is an undeniable one between either of theſe, compared with the ſubſequent and ſtanding Laws of that reaſonable *Inſtitution*. I believe no Body will diſpute it, with regard to the latter; and as to the former, it appears very plain from the general *Voice of the Goſpel*, which every where makes the explicit Acknowledgment of *Jeſus* to be the *Meſſiah*, the one neceſſary *Article of Faith*; and even this Confeſſion from the dying Thief procur'd his Salvation. But will any one *now* infer from hence, that a meer *Faith* of Aſſent is

ſufficient

ſufficient for us? Surely we have been taught *other Things* ſince!

THIS will farther appear by a little Obſervation on thoſe Words, "*the King-* "*dom of God*", and "*the Kingdom of* "*Heaven*", which are uſed promiſcuouſly, and do ſo often occur in the *Evangeliſts*, but eſpecially in our *Saviour*'s Parables.

WE are not to underſtand by them directly the future Happineſs of the Saints, but rather the *Goſpel Diſpenſation* in general; and for this I claim the Suffrage of all Commentators on thoſe *Texts*, as well as the Evidence ariſing from the concomitant Senſe of the *Texts* themſelves. See the xiii*th* of *Matthew*, and tell us if thoſe *Words* are not to be ſo underſtood throughout that Chapter: And to make the Argument ſtill the ſtronger, you'll find them the ſame in the Caſe before us.

CHRIST ſays to his *Diſciples*, Mark x. Verſ. 14, 15. "*Suffer little* "*Chil-*

" *Children to come to me, and forbid* " *them not; for of such is the Kingdom of* " *God* ". And " *Whosoever shall not* " *receive the Kingdom of God as a little* " *Child, shall not enter therein.* Compare these *Verses* with that Place, " *as* " *new born Babes desire the sincere* " *Milk of the Word* ", 1 Peter ii. Vers. 2, and then say if this Exposition be not right.

Now though the *Kingdom of Grace*, or the *Gospel*, be the direct Road to the *Kingdom of Glory*, yet the Distinction of their Ideas will abundantly illustrate my Argument. For in *Verse* the 17*th* of the same *Chapter*, immediately follows the Story of this *unhappy Worldling*; which you quote at large, not forgetting our *Saviour*'s just Reflexion upon it, " *how hardly shall* " *they that have Riches, enter into the* " *Kingdom of God* ". Hardly indeed! at a Time when the Circumstances of this *Kingdom* exacted an entire Renunciation

of

of them, from all its *Subjects*, and that for very good Reasons.

THE *King* himself, contrary to the vain Expectations of the *Jews* concerning him, appear'd in the lowest Form of Life. The *Wall of Partition* was to be broken down, and the Darkness of heathenish Superstition to be chas'd and expell'd by this *Sun of Righteousness:* And upon the Ruins of these was to be established such a System of *Faith* and *Manners*, as was worthy of *God*, and fit for *Man*. Such *extraordinary* Purposes, required as *extraordinary* Measures; and what were those? Not the boasted Arts of Learning and Philosophy! These were powerfully superseded, and their Weakness and Imperfection mercifully relieved, by the divine Spirit and *Wisdom from above*. Not the Aids of *Wealth* and *Grandeur*! These were so far from being subservient to this *wise Design*, that they were an improper *Retinue* for this *spiritual Prince*, who had now *veil'd his Glory*, and

and was in a State of profeſs'd *Humiliation.* Poverty and Meanneſs were fitter Inſtruments for his *Purpoſe*, and more compatible with the State of a *new Religion*, which was to force its Way by its *Purity* and *Simplicity*, thro' all the Reſiſtance of the *World*, and the Terrors of *Perſecution* : No wonder then that our *Saviour* expected ſuch Compliances from his Converts, as were eſſentially Neceſſary to his *main Deſign.*

THE Argument ſtill encreaſes, with Relation to thoſe who were immediately to propagate this *Religion.* It was abundantly requiſite, they ſhou'd be diveſted of all *ſecular Advantages*, in Order to give Force to their *Precepts*, as well as to clear them from the Suſpicion of Craft or Impoſture ; which, I believe, has been always reckon'd amongſt the ſtrongeſt *Evidences* in Favour of *Chriſtianity.*

BUT becauſe this *Diſpenſation* was under ſuch proper and ſuitable Re-

ſtraints in its *infant State*, are we to expect no greater Indulgencies from it in its *maturer Age*? Shou'd I preſume to ask any of your *reverend Body* to prove their *Credentials*, by *immediate Inſpiration* and *miraculous Powers*, I doubt not they wou'd ſoon tell me, the Reaſons for theſe were long ſince ceas'd; and that our *Religion*, being now *ſpread* and *eſtabliſh'd*, needs no other Helps than the *common Arts of Perſuaſion*, under the *ordinary Aſſiſtance of divine Grace*: I freely allow the Argument to be good, and only deſire it may be apply'd in the preſent *Caſe*. If it had been ſo, I flatter my ſelf, we ſhou'd not have met with thoſe ſhocking Expreſſions, (Page 90.) " That all " rich Men are obliged to do the ſame, " that the *rich Man* in the *Goſpel* was " obliged to; and that they may not " enjoy their *Eſtates*, and yet enter in- " to the *Kingdom of God* ". Is *Jeſus Chriſt* then ſuch a hard Maſter? Or rather, has he not told us, that *his Yoke is*

eaſy,

easy, and his Burthen light? What is there in the Genius of his *Religion*, especially as it now stands, that should require us to SELL ALL? Or to speak in your *Phrase*, "forbid us the "peaceful pleasurable Enjoyment of "Riches"; which you expressly say it does, Page 99. Is there then no Peace nor Pleasure but in Excess and Voluptuousness? And is it not possible sensibly to relish the Bounty of *Heaven*, in the Enjoyment of a plentiful Estate, without *Impiety* towards our *Maker*, Injustice or Uncharitableness to our Fellow-Creatures, or Intemperance or Indecencies as to our selves? If this be the Case, I'll join Issue with you, and freely consent to part with my *little All*. But since, blessed be *God!* even in this degenerate Age, we have so many *Instances* to the contrary, I hope your wild *Enthusiasm* will not be able to do much Mischief. It has done too much formerly amongst us, by laying the Foundation of half the Abuses

in the *Church of Rome*. To what impious Purposes have not their *religious Houses* been prostituted? and how much Pains did it cost, during the *happy Reformation*, to extirpate the vast Numbers of them, with which this Kingdom abounded? And shall we long to return to the *Flesh-Pots and Onions of Egypt*!

I SHALL finish my Remarks on the young Man's Story, with one Observation more, which, I think, fully makes against your Supposition; and that is, from what pass'd between our *Saviour* and his Disciples, immediately upon this Person's going away: *Jesus* says to his Disciples, "*How hardly shall* "*they that have Riches enter into the* "*Kingdom of God*"! Mark x. Vers. 23. In the next Verse we find them "*astonished at his Words*"; but to relieve their Fears, and soften their Apprehensions, he presently changes his Speech thus, "*Children, how hard is it* "*for them that* TRUST *in Riches, to*

"*enter*

" *enter into the Kingdom of God* "! Now I appeal to your ſelf, if this *expreſſive* Alteration of the *Words*, does not plainly intend to convey to them a different Notion of his Meaning, from what they had firſt conceiv'd?

If what I have ſaid be a fair and rational Account of the Matter, as I perſuade my ſelf it is, then all the Pages you have ſpent in with-holding the *Comforts* of human Life, and repreſenting the *Saviour* of the World as an unmerciful *Legiſlator*, might have been very well ſpared.

I have not here been arguing *directly* in Self-defence; for Riches were never my Portion, and I neither expect nor deſire them: Yet their extenſive and beneficial Influence, claim, at leaſt, a *good Word* from all, who (though more *remotely*) feel the common Benefit.

I am not much concern'd to remark upon the other Parts of your Book; that which I have already touch'd upon

on has given the greateſt Offence, and is what I am chiefly ſollicitous to undermine: It's the main *Root* from whence your wild extended *Branches* grow, that caſt a noxious and baleful *Shade* o'er all the Comforts of Life. I ſhou'd be in great Danger of poetiſing here, if the Subject you give me was not ſo very diſconſolate!

For the reſt, I leave you in *quiet Poſſeſſion*; but am obliged to make an Obſervation or two before I conclude. You have brought many other *Texts*, to give concurring Evidence to the Senſe you have been contending for, on the foregoing Subject; to which I muſt reply, That if I have prov'd you plainly to miſtake in the *principal Inſtance*, you can have no Relief *there*, from other *Texts*, let them ſpeak what they will. And yet, that you may not think I make a Conceſſion in prejudice to my Argument, I will be bold to ſay, that where you have made thoſe *Texts* look the ſame Way, you have forc'd

them

them from their undoubted Sense, in as *violent* a Manner: And I dare engage to see this proved, if there was Occasion; but, I hope, enough has been said to make it needless.

THE Abuse of *Scripture Allegories* and *Phraseology*, and oftentimes an injudicious Explication of *Parables*, have been one great Source of *Enthusiasm* in all Ages: And this is not the first Time, that *Notions* like yours have sprung up to the Disturbance of weak Judgments, and tender Consciences; but, like *Mushrooms*, suddenly exhaled from moist Vapours, have perished as soon, for Want of timely *Cookery* and *Art*: Tho' it must be owned, you have *dress'd* this *Scheme* of yours, with so much Rhetorick and Language, as very much help to disguise and hide its Weakness.

BUT to contract this Dispute, as much as possible, and instead of a thousand other Arguments I beg leave to observe, that should your *Doctrines* prevail,

prevail, and the *Practice* you recommend become *Universal*, the Consequence would even defeat the Purposes of Nature and Providence; subvert all Industry, Trade, and Commerce; wou'd confound all Order, Peace, and Distinction; and finally, alienate and destroy every social Blessing of Life.

You seem in Part sensible of this, and in Page 112. anticipate the Substance of the very *Objection*; but then how do you answer it? -- Why by *Scripture Authorities* wrong applyed! By telling us, that "*the Wisdom of* "*the World is Foolishness with God*; "and that the *Doctrine of the Cross*, "*a crucified Saviour*, is contrary to "*worldly Greatness* and *Wisdom*. What foreign Auxiliaries are here! Figurative Expressions, that were used upon quite another *Occasion*! and peculiarly relate to the *Meanness* of our *Saviour*'s *Appearance*, and the *Ignominy* of his *Death*. But alas! those *Texts* will

not

not do your *Buſineſs*, they are of too *divine* and noble an Extract, to ſerve the Cauſe of *Arbitrary Power!* In vain therefore do you ſtrive to enliſt them!

I MUST therefore preſume (pardon me for doing ſo) that though you ſeem to diſclaim *Monaſtick Retirements*, yet your *Principles* manifeſtly ſerve to promote the ſame *Effects*, as they certainly flow from the ſame *Cauſe*, *miſguided Zeal*. --- I am very far from ſaying, or thinking, that you intend *as much*, but I am perſuaded your Doctrine virtually ſpeaks *no leſs*, however diſguiſed, even from your ſelf.

I SHOU'D be very tender of diſputing with an Advocate for *Religion*, more eſpecially at a Time when our *common Chriſtianity* is ſo fiercely and openly attack'd; but that I have two Things (chiefly) to fear from your *Performance*. The one, leaſt your

 ſevere

ſevere and unnatural *Repreſentation* of it, ſhould give its *Enemies* a cauſeleſs and unwarrantable Advantage over us; and the other, leaſt many of its *Friends*, prejudiced by your *falſe Reaſonings*, ſhould either deſert its *Intereſt*, or reject its own real *Authority* and *Rules*: And had you not too much refined upon theſe, I'll aſſure you Sir, you had not found an Opponent in me.

I THINK, I can clearly diſcern in the *ſacred Volume*, a happy Medium between unchriſtian *Liberties*, and the *intolerable*, may I not ſay, *inhuman Diſcipline*, which you inculcate. --- I know your own religious Life adds great Force to your Precepts; but this, when it ſupererrogates, can be no more a *Rule* to other People, than the ſingular Imperfections of a few Men, can excuſe the voluntary Diſobedience of the reſt.

I HAVE now done with all I think convenient, or neceſſary, to ſay upon this Occaſion; which I am determined ſhall not give Birth to any future Controverſy betwixt us: I am diſinclin'd, and unequal to any ſuch Work; neither am I vain enough to imagine, you will think your Reputation much concerned, to regard any Thing I have ſaid againſt your *darling* and *peculiar* Sentiments.

I THOUGHT the *Argument* of the enſuing *little Poem*, as taken from the exceeding Bounty and Goodneſs of the great Author of Nature, did moſt ſtrongly preſume againſt your *State of Bondage*; and have therefore ſubjoin'd it. The *Subject* being ſo *copious*, I have touch'd but on a ſmall Part, and *drawn* that too *in Miniature*. How well I have ſucceeded, I ſubmit to publick Opinion; for as I hate Vanity and Self-applauſe, I can't but think

hypocritical Modesty full as criminal. *I am, with true Respect,*

SIR,

Your affectionate well Wisher,

And faithful humble Servant,

Philanthropos.

A

COPY of VERSES

Addreſs'd to

Mr. *L A W.*

PSALM CIV. Verſe 24.

The Earth is full of thy Riches.

Natura nil agit fruſtra.

A

COPY of VERSES

Addressed to

Mr. L A W.

PSALM CIV. Verse 24.

The Earth is full of thy Riches.

Natura nil agit frustra.

A COPY OF *VERSES, &c.*

SAY, *Reverend Sage*, what
Motive cou'd inſpire
Th' unfriendly *Piece*, with
ſuch miſguided Fire!
What JESUS taught, thy *fearful* Soul
miſtakes,
And like itſelf, a *gloomy* Syſtem makes.

NOT

Not taste! not touch! all Pleasure disavow!
These are not Doctrines for *Recluses* now!
The wiser *Monk*, and more discerning *Nun*,
Disclaim thy Precepts, and thy *Penance* shun.

Where-e'er we go, where-e'er we turn our Eyes,
Luxuriant Blessings to our Wishes rise!
All-bounteous *Heaven* provides a rich Repast,
To feast our Senses, and indulge our Taste.

Earth,

Earth, *Sea*, and *Air*, profuſe of ev'ry
Good,
By his Command ſupply our *daily Food!*
The fertile *Womb* replete with glittering
Ore,
Invites our Toil, the Treaſure to explore!
What Glory dawns, where Gems ſponta-
neous grow,
That with unpoliſh'd Luſtre faintly glow!
How great the Pride where *Flocks* un-
number'd breed,
And rich in fleecy Honours, cloath, and
feed!
The Cattle on a thouſand Hills around,
Relieve our Labour, and improve the
Ground!

Nor leſs the little *Silk-worm*'s active Skill
Beſpeaks aloud officious *Nature*'s Will!
His Bowel ſpins the ſilken Bottom o'er,
Then dies, exhauſted of its gloſſy Store!
Exuberant *Nature* acts a generous Part,
And leaves the reſt to *Induſtry* and *Art*.

GAY *Flowers* and *Greens* their fragrant Odours yield,
And paint with blooming Pride the verdant Field!
Muſick has Charms our Paſſions to compoſe,
And pow'rful *Beauty* ſoftens all our Woes!

Why

Why ſwell the cluſter'd *Vines* with
ſprightly *Juice*,
And *Joy and Gladneſs in the Heart produce*?
Why the fat *Olive* yield a grateful *Oyl*,
That makes the Face with chearful Luſtre ſmile?
Why *Aromatick Groves* their *Spices* bear,
Diffuſe their Fragrance, and embalm the Air?
What *Fruits* enrich the *cultivated Waſte*,
That vie in Smell, in Flavour, and in Taſte!
In *theſe*, and countleſs *Bleſſings* that we ſee,
The *Pleaſure* and the harmleſs *Senſe* agree!

 And

And has fond *Nature* thus indulg'd our
Lives,
Yet interdicted all the *Sweets* ſhe gives?
No! *rigid Tutor*, thou doſt widely rove,
And poorly wrong the kind Creator's
Love!
" Whilſt touch not, taſte not, what is
" freely giv'n,
" Is but thy niggard Voice, diſgracing
" bounteous Heav'n ".
Unbounded Wiſhes taint our *lawful* Joys,
'Tis not *Enjoyment*, but *Exceſs* deſtroys.

HADS'T thou (content) arraing'd the
vicious Stage,
The *guilty* Pleaſure of an *impious* Age;

Each

Each Breaſt that burns with true *Religi-*
on's Flame,
Had own'd thy Praiſes, and revered thy
Name:
Or chiefly ſtrove our *Paſſions* to controul,
And cure the wild Diſorders of the Soul;
Envy, *Revenge*, *Ambition*, *Fraud*, and
Strife,
And all the *Plagues* that blacken human
Life:
Made *Peace on Earth, good-will to Men*,
thy Care,
And not confined us all to *Sighs* and
Prayer;
The pious Task had bore a laſting Praiſe,
Great as the Tribute thankful Virtue pays.

But

But thus to punish with tyrannick Laws,
And torture *Scripture* to support thy *Cause*,
To spurn the Favours gracious *Heav'n* bestows,
And slight his *Mercies* with *unbidden Vows!*
We scorn thy *Precepts*, and despise thy *School*,
Inform'd by *Reason*, and the *sacred Rule:*
Ev'n *Saints* impeach'd, now plead the gentler *Place*,
We are not under LAW, *but under* GRACE!

FINIS.

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